

## Recruiting New Members

Help! The energy level of your neighborhood organization has sunk to a new low, and while you have successfully completed your latest community project, there are still lots more work to be done.

Groups may initially attract members through well-publicized meetings on issues that concern many or projects that involve lots of people. If your group is in the public eye, it will certainly boost membership. After the publicity dies away and the problem is solved, active members may disappear.

Finding new members is crucial to keeping neighborhood organizations alive. While many people appreciate what the group is doing for their neighborhood, they may not attend meetings or even come in direct contact with your neighborhood organization.

Neighborhood organizations often inadvertently restrict their numbers by having membership forms and sign up sheets only at meetings. In order to maximize your membership potential, the group should come out of the closet and into the public's eye. Be everywhere neighbors are. **Undertake a membership drive that directly reaches every household within your boundaries.**

1. *Have volunteers go door to door calling on their neighbors.* This can be a weeklong or one-day blitz. Consider having a membership drive and then sponsoring a party for volunteers where they can have fun and share experiences later that same day.
2. *Arm volunteers with printed materials to encourage the residents to get involved.* This can be a simple letter from the group's Chair that explains your particular neighborhood organization along with details of upcoming activities. Materials may also include information on municipal services and programs available in the area. Also, volunteers should carry membership forms with them and offer both immediate and mail-in membership opportunities.
3. *Neighborhoods can develop a block leader network as a foundation for a membership campaign as well as other activities.* Block leaders can pass out flyers and newsletters, welcome new residents, serve as a conduit for specific problems on the block, and place volunteers in activities. Work with organized Block Watches.
4. *Members can also be found at community gatherings.* Sponsor a booth at a community festival or event. This is a great opportunity to talk to people in your area. Remember, have information and membership sign-up sheets at your booth.